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EXDIS

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TAGS: PFOR, GR, US

SUBJECT: SECRETARY'S MEETING WITH GREEK FOREIGN MINISTER

BITSIOS

1. SUMMARY. SECRETARY MET MORNING SEPTEMBER 29 WITH GREEK FOREIGN MINISTER BITSIOS. MEETING LASTED ONE HOUR AND FOCUSED ALMOST ENTIRELY ON GREEK-TURKISH DISPUTE OVER AEGEAN. BITSIOS CONFIRMED HE WOULD BE HAVING SECOND MEETING WITH TURKISH FONMIN CAGLAYANGIL OCTOBER 1 BUT WAS SKEPTICAL WHETHER REAL NEGOTIATING PROCESS WOULD DEVELOP. HIS PESSIMISM WAS BASED ON CAGLAYANGIL'S HARD-LINE UNGA SPEECH PREVIOUS DAY, RECENT STATEMENT BY TURKISH ENERGY MINISTER ABOUT POSSIBLE FUTURE SAILINGS OF SISMIL, AND POSSIBILITY TURKS WERE ARRANGING FOR US FIRM TO DRILL FOR OIL IN AEGEAN. BITSIOS SAID CARAMANLIS VIEWED SITUATION AS SERIOUS AND WANTED US TO KNOW THAT FURTHER TURKISH PROVOCATIONS COULD LEAD TO DIRECT GREEK REACTION. BITSIOS ASKED SECRETARY TO URGE TURKS TO EXERCISE RESTRAINT AND MODERATION.

2. SECRETARY SAID WE STOOD READY TO BE OF ASSISTANCE ON AEGEAN. HE ALSO REFERRED BITSIOS TO HIS OWN FORTHCOMING UNGA SPEECH IN WHICH HE PLANNED TO REFER TO NEED FOR EARLY

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MOVEMENT ON CYPRUS, AND TO SUGGEST SOME GENERAL PRINCIPLES

WHICH MIGHT ASSIST TWO COMMUNITIES IN DISCUSSING SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES WHICH WERE KEY TO ANY FUTURE SETTLEMENT. END SUMMARY.

3. SECRETARY MET FOR ONE HOUR SEPTEMBER 29 WITH GREEK FOREIGN MINISTER BITSIOS. ACCOMPANYING BITSIOS WERE DIRECTOR OF GREEK MFA JOHN TZOUNIS AND CHEF DE CABINET CLEOM CATSAMBIS. PRESENT ON US SIDE, IN ADDITION TO SECRETARY, WERE UNDER SECRETARY HABIBN ASSISTANT SECRETARY HARTMAN AND EUR/SE DIRECTOR KEDSKY.

4. DETAILED REVIEW OF AEGEAN ISSUE OCCUPIED ALMOST ENTIRE SESSION. BITSIOS SAID HE PLANNED TO GO THROUGH WITH SECOND SCHEDULED MEETING OCTOBER 1 WITH TURKISH FOREIGN MINISTER CAGLAYANGIL, BUT HE WAS NOT OPTIMISTIC. HE HAD DETECTED A CERTAIN ALOOFNESS IN CAGLAYANGIL'S ATTITUDE DURING THE FIRST MEETING, AND THE VERY SCHEDULING OF THE SECOND MEETING THE DAY BEFORE BITSIOS' SCHEDULED DEPARTURE SUGGESTED THE TURKS WANTED ONLY ONE BRIEF SHOW OF COOPERATION.

5. MORE DISCOURAGING STILL WAS CAGLAYANGIL'S SPEECH SEPTEMBER 28 BEFORE THE UNGA. LIKE DEMIREL BEFORE HIM, CAGLAYANGIL NOW TALKED OF AEGEAN ISLANDS RATHER THAN GREEK ISLANDS AND PUT FORWARD A COMPARISON OF POPULATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES, SAYING THIS SHOULD HAVE SOME RELEVANCE TO THE ISSUE OF CONTINENTAL SHELF DELIMITATION IN THE AEGEAN.

6. BITSIOS SAID GREECE WAS ALSO CONCERNED BY RECENT STATEMENTS BY THE TURKISH ENERGY MINISTER IN ANKARA TO THE EFFECT THAT SISMIL SAILINGS WOULD RESUME IN APRIL, AND THE SECRET INFORMATION GREECE HAD OBTAINED THAT A US COMPANY WAS NEGOTIATING TO BEGIN DRILLING FOR OIL IN THE AEGEAN BEFORE THE END OF 1976. BITSIOS NOTED HE HAD JUST RECEIVED A COMMUNICATION FROM CARAMANLIS, IN WHICH THE PRIME MINISTER ASKED THAT THE SECRETARY BE MADE AWARE THAT THE GREEK GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE CAN ACCEPT NO FURTHER PROVOCATIONS FROM TURKEY. CARAMANLIS IMPLIED THAT HE WOULD EITHER QUIT HIS POST IN THE GOVERNMENT OR THAT THERE WOULD HAVE TO BE A "VIOLENT REACTION" SHOULD THE TURKS TAKE SOME NEW UNILATERAL

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INITIATIVE.

7. BITSIOS ASKED THAT CARAMANLIS' CONCERNS BE PASSED ON TO CAGLAYANGIL, AND THAT THE US DO WHAT IT CAN TO SEE THAT THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT ADOPTS MODERATE POSITIONS IN THE FORTHCOMING AEGEAN NEGOTIATIONS.

8. THE SECRETARY SAID HE WOULD BE HAPPY TO DO WHAT HE COULD.

HE WAS PREPARED TO ENCOURAGE MOVEMENT TOWARD A REASONABLE SETTLEMENT, BUT WONDERED JUST WHAT THE GREEKS WERE PREPARED TO OFFER THE TURKS IN THE AEGEAN. IT WAS RIDICULOUS FOR THE TURKS TO CLAIM ANYTHING WEST OF THE MEDIAN LINE, BUT IF ONE ALSO EXCLUDED THE SIX-MILE ZONE AROUND THE GREEK ISLANDS EAST OF THE MEDIAN LINE, HOW MUCH AREAS WAS LEFT TO NEGOTIATE?

9. TZOUNIS RESPONDED THAT SOME 25 PERCENT OF THE AEGEAN WAS STILL OPEN UNDER THIS KIND OF CALCULATION, WHICH WAS EXACTLY THE ONE THE GREEKS WERE OPERATING UNDER. BITSIOS CONFIRMED THAT THE GREEKS WOULD EXPLAIN TO THE TURKS ON FRIDAY EXACTLY WHAT PORTION OF THE AEGEAN IN THEIR VIEW WAS OPEN FOR NEGOTIATION.

10. THE SECRETARY THEN TURNED THE DISCUSSION BRIEFLY TO CYPRUS, INDICATING HE PLANNED TO MAKE REFERENCE IN HIS UNGA SPEECH TO NECESSITY OF EARLY MOVEMENT ON CYPRUS QUESTION. HE TOLD BITSIOS HE WOULD THEN REFER TO THE IDEA OF PRINCIPLES ALONG LINES HE HAD DONE IN HIS 1975 UNGA SPEECH. HE EXPRESSED UNDERSTANDING THAT IT WAS UP TO THE TWO COMMUNITIES TO DECIDE WHETHER THESE PRINCIPLES COULD ASSIST IN THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS, BUT ASKED AT THE SAME TIME THAT BITSIOS EXAMINE THE POINTS OF HIS SPEECH IN A SYMPATHETIC MANNER.

11. CONVERSATION ENDED WITH SECRETARY SUGGESTING THAT EFFORT BE MADE IN MONTHS AHEAD TO DEVELOP COHERENT STRATEGY WITH GREEKS TO COVER ALL ISSUES IN EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN. BITSIOS INDICATED WILLINGNESS TO SIT DOWN FOR THIS KIND OF SESSION AT ANY TIME CONVENIENT TO THE SECRETARY. IN SO DOING, HE EMPHASIZED AGAIN THAT THE SITUATION IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO DRIFT TOWARD WAR, POINTING OUT THAT ANY KIND OF PHYSICAL EN-
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COUNTER, HOWEVER SHORT IN DURATION, COULD HAVE CATAclysmic EFFECT ON FUTURE INTERNAL MAKEUP AND EXTERNAL ORIENTATION OF BOTH GREECE AND TURKEY. SECRETARY AGREED.

12. FOLLOWING MEETING BOTH BITSIOS AND SECRETARY TALKED BRIEFLY TO PRESS. BOTH STRESSED THAT THEIR MEETING HAD BEEN OPEN, FRIENDLY AND USEFUL AND THAT BOTH CYPRUS AND AEGEAN QUESTIONS HAD BEEN DISCUSSED. BITSIOS RESPONDED TO PRESS QUESTIONS BY INDICATING HE HAD BRIEFED SECRETARY ON LATEST DEVELOPMENTS ON AEGEAN SITUATION, INCLUDING CONCERN IN ATEHNS OVER UNGA SPEECH BY TURKSIH FOREIGN MINISTER. HE AFFIRMED THAT GREEKS WOULD APPROACH FORTHCOMING NEGOTIATIONS WITH TURKS ON AEGEAN WITH MODERATION AND LPEN MIND AND HOPED TURKEY WOULD FOLLOW SUIT.
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